

[Notebook of 20 Jan 1963]

## CRISIS NOTES

HSR/Nitze Odds

During crisis, HSR said to me: "I think the Executive Committee put the chance of nuclear very low, though they still may overestimate it 100 times; <sup>15</sup> they may put it at 1 in a 100."

[10? see below: "1/1000"  
times]

[Oct 29, 1962]

But shortly after, Nitze told him he had put chance of some form of nuclear war <sup>if we had struck missiles.</sup> fairly high. HSR asked, what subj. prob.? Nitze: 1 in 10. And he was low in the group.

HSR: If these people put the chance of nuclear war that high in that situation — he would have said, 1 in a 1000 — you can imagine what they think the consequences of using a nuclear weapon would be.

It would take a very great deal to make VFK or McN use a nuclear weapon. When McN came back from Berlin, having 'shaken his fist' at the Wall and said we were ready to use nuclears, Bundy asked him, "Why do you say irrational things like that?" McN: "I have to tell we're built up our conventional forces." [But note Bundy memo in crisis: need for early nuclear threat in Berlin crisis]



Limnitzer: agrees with Norstad. Would leave Europeans  
with no missiles. ~~100%~~ Only 10% of Alliance forces, but  
100% of Europeans.